

Remarks**I. Status of the Claims**

Claims 1-15 are pending in the current patent application. Claims 1-6 and 9-10 stand rejected, claims 7-8 are objected to and claims 11-15 are either allowable or allowed.

Claims 1 has been amended by incorporation of the phrase "which has a molecular weight in the range of about 3000 to about 20,000" into the clause which refers to the polyethylene glycol. Support for this amendment is in the specification as originally filed including claim 8. Claim 8 has been canceled by this amendment. Entry of the amendments to the claims is respectfully requested. Applicants reserve the right, without waiver or prejudice, to pursue any canceled or deleted subject matter in a continuation application(s). No new matter has been added by these amendments.

II. The 35 U.S.C. §102(b) Rejection

Claims 1-6 and 9-10 stand rejected under 35 USC 102(b) as being allegedly anticipated by Chen et al., US 6,525,102 (the '102 patent). Applicants respectfully request the Examiner to consider claims 1-6 and 9-10 in view of the present amendment and withdraw the rejection.

Instant claim 1 has been amended by incorporation of the limitation of previous claim 8 into it. The Examiner has previously acknowledged that claim 8 would be allowable if rewritten into independent form. Claim 1, as presently amended, is now the equivalent of the previous claim 8 in independent form. Claim 8 has been canceled as superfluous in view of the amendment to claim 1. Claims 2-6 and 9-10 all depend, either directly or indirectly from claim 1. Applicants respectfully submit that claims 1-6 and 9-10 are clearly not anticipated by the '102 patent since that reference in no way discloses each and every element of the subject matter of claims 1-6 and 9-10 in the manner as set forth in these claims. For this reason, Applicants respectfully request the Examiner to consider claims 1-6 and 9-10 as presently amended and withdraw the 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) rejection.

III. The Objection to the Claims

Claims 7 and 8 have been objected to but would be allowable if rewritten into independent form. Claim 8 has been canceled as the limitation of that claim has been

incorporated into claim 1 and thus the objection to that claim is rendered moot. Claim 7 now depends from amended claim 1 which Applicants submit is in condition for allowance. Applicants therefore respectfully request the Examiner to reconsider claim 7 in view of this amendment and withdraw the objection to that claim.

Based on the amendments to the Claims and the arguments provided above, Applicants respectfully submit that Claims 1-7 and 9-15, as amended, are in condition for allowance.

Respectfully Submitted:

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